

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1623

To prohibit the Secretary of the Interior from issuing new Federal oil and gas leases to holders of existing leases who do not diligently develop the land subject to the existing leases or relinquish the leases, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 6, 2009

Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. DODD, and Mr. MENENDEZ) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To prohibit the Secretary of the Interior from issuing new Federal oil and gas leases to holders of existing leases who do not diligently develop the land subject to the existing leases or relinquish the leases, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Responsible Federal
5 Oil and Gas Lease Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. ISSUANCE OF NEW LEASES.**

7 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) LESSEE.—The term “lessee” includes any
2 person or other entity that controls, is controlled by,
3 or is in or under common control with, a lessee.

4 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
5 the Secretary of the Interior.

6 (b) LEASES.—Effective beginning on the date of pro-
7 mulgation of regulations under subsection (c), the Sec-
8 retary shall not issue any new lease that authorizes the
9 exploration for or production of oil or natural gas under
10 section 17 of the Mineral Leasing Act (33 U.S.C. 226),
11 the Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands (30 U.S.C.
12 351 et seq.), or the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act
13 (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.) to a person unless the person—

14 (1) certifies for each existing lease under those
15 Acts for the production of oil or gas with respect to
16 which the person is a lessee, that the person has dili-
17 gently developed the Federal land that is subject to
18 the lease in order to produce oil or natural gas or
19 is producing oil or natural gas from the land; or

20 (2) has relinquished all Federal oil and gas
21 leases under which oil and gas is not being diligently
22 developed.

23 (c) DILIGENT DEVELOPMENT.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
25 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Sec-

1 retary shall promulgate regulations that define “dili-
2 gently developed” for purposes of this section.

3 (2) REGULATIONS.—The regulations shall—

4 (A) include benchmarks for oil and gas de-
5 velopment that will ensure that leaseholders
6 produce oil and gas from each lease within the
7 original term of the lease; and

8 (B) require each leaseholder to submit to
9 the Secretary a diligent development plan dem-
10 onstrating how the lessee will meet the bench-
11 marks.

12 (d) FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH REQUIREMENTS.—
13 Any person that fails to comply with this section (includ-
14 ing any regulation or order issued under this section) shall
15 be liable for a civil penalty under the terms and conditions
16 of section 109 of the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Man-
17 agement Act of 1982 (30 U.S.C. 1719).

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